

Message Text

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41

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SCCT-01 EB-07 COME-00 SSO-00

NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

SIL-01 LAB-04 OPIC-03 TRSE-00 OMB-01 SY-05 DOTE-00

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O 131430Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 203

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EMIN, ELAB, JM

SUBJECT: VIOLENCE FORCES CLOSURE ALCOA ALUMINA PLANT
AT CLARENDON

1. ALCOA'S PLANT AT CLARENDON FORCED TO SUSPEND OPERATIONS LATE FEB. 11 BECAUSE OF ATTACKS ON JAMAICAN AND EXPATRIATE SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL BY FIVE UNIDENTIFIED MOTORCYCLISTS WHO USED LEAD PIPES AND ANGLE IRONS AND GENERALLY TERRORIZED STAFF. ATTACK OCCURRED DURING MEETING AT PLANT GATE OF NWU UNION EMPLOYEES WHO WERE PROTESTING ALCOA'S LAYOFF PROPOSAL. LATTER NECESSITATED (ACCORDING ALCOA) BY CURRENT STRIKE OF JAMAICAN RAILWAY EMPLOYEES AND CONSEQUENT INABILITY TRANSPORT PLANT PRODUCT. INFORMATION REMAINS SKETCHY AND EMBASSY CAN CONFIRM THUS FAR ONLY THAT ONE JAMAICAN AND ONE EXPATRIATE INJURED.

2. FOLLOWING OUTBREAK OF VIOLENCE ALL PLANT SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL LEFT CLARENDON IN CONVOY WITH POLICE ESCORT FOR KINGSTON WHERE ALL RESIDE. PLANT NOW GUARDED BY JDF, JCF, AND ALCOA SECURITY GUARDS.

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3. AMBASSADOR SPOKE WITH BOTH CROUCH AND ALCOA VP KALTWASSER (LATTER ON ALCOA NEGOTIATING TEAM PRESENTLY IN KINGSTON) CONCERNING SITUATION. VIEW OF ALCOA MANAGEMENT IS THAT "OPERATION OF PLANT IMPOSSIBLE IN GUERILLA WARFARE ATMOSPHERE" AND IT WOULD NOT BE REOPENED UNTIL GOJ GUARANTEED ADEQUATE SECURITY. ALCOA HAS NOT YET MADE FORMAL COMPLAINT TO GOJ. CROUCH ADVISED BY AMBASSADOR TO CONTACT MAYER MATALON WHO HAD EARLIER IN TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR STATED GOJ WAITING TO HEAR FROM ALCOA ON SECURITY MEASURES NEEDED TO REOPEN. MATALON DEPLORED INCIDENT AND SAID IT WAS PERPETRATED BY "HOOLIGANS".

4. COMMENT: ASIDE FROM SECURITY GUARANTEES, ALCOA MAY ALSO INSIST (AS PRECONDITION TO PLANT REOPENING THAT RAILWAY SERVICE BE RESUMED. HOWEVER, THERE IS FURTHER POSSIBILITY ALCOA WILL CLAIM (IF ALL OTHER CONDITIONS SATISFIED) THAT REFUSAL OF KEY PERSONNEL TO RETURN TO PLANT, AND INABILITY ALCOA RECRUIT REPLACEMENTS, MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE REOPEN PLANT. ALCOA PERSONNEL, OWING INCREASING LEVEL HARASSMENT, ARE IN FACT CONCERNED FOR SAFETY OF THEMSELVES AND DEPENDENTS. WE ALSO UNDERSTAND RECRUITMENT NEW EXPATRIATE PERSONNEL FOR JAMAICA IS BECOMING AN INDUSTRY-WIDE PROBLEM.
GERARD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ALUMINUM, CIVIL DISORDERS, CLOSURE OF OFFICES, INDUSTRIAL PLANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976KINGST00657
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760055-0755
From: KINGSTON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760252/aaaabsua.tel
Line Count: 85
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 JUL 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <28 OCT 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VIOLENCE FORCES CLOSURE ALCOA ALUMINA PLANT AT CLARENDON
TAGS: EMIN, ELAB, JM, ALCOA ALUMINA PLANT
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006